

On the Move

Cat owners face a challenge when finding a home to rent. Here's how to make your cat attractive to landlords.

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The more you use cat-exclusive furniture like cat perches, cat trees and hiding spaces, and create a cat-friendly interior environment, the more your cats will interact with their own furniture and the less they will impact the rented environment, Johnson-Bennett said.

In other words, happy cats make happy renters and delighted landlords.

On Moving Day Moving is an especially dangerous time for frightened pets that can be accidentally lost. This is a time to use common sense to keep your cat safe. While packing goes on in other rooms, set up a safe zone in a room where your cats can be confined so they are not exposed to the chaos of the move. If the door to this room can't be secured against accidental opening, put the cat in a well-protected crate. You may even want to consider boarding the cat while the house is being packed.

When you reach your new home, consider it an opportunity to set everything up so that your cat can adjust with a minimum of difficulties. Unlike we humans who thrive on variety, cats are creatures of habit and take great comfort from familiarity, Johnson-Bennett said. In the new home, nothing is familiar. The big mistake is to put your cat right into the center of chaos.

Set up one room as a cat sanctuary. Place familiar furniture in the room, even if it is not a permanent location. The more familiar, the better. This is not a time to throw out the old litterbox and scratching post, Johnson-Bennett said. Set up the sanctuary room with the things your cat is used to using. You might consider spraying the room with Feliway or using a Feliway diffuser, which hormonally calms cats.

Let your cat decide when to come out of its sanctuary and explore the rest of the house. Gauge how your cat is reacting, Johnson-Bennett said. If it is curious and happy, you can let it into more of the home, a little at a time. If it is still hiding, leave it in the sanctuary longer. Patience is especially important. The most important thing is to recognize that your cat is an individual and let your cat set the pace.

Once your cat starts to come out and interact with the new home, bring it into a cat-friendly space with cat perches, cat trees and hiding places. Your cat will feel happier and more secure in its new home.

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